

Forestry Tasmania Stands By Claim

Forestry Tasmania has released documents that clearly show that it decided not to renew Ecotourism Australia's accreditation.

The CEO of EcoTourism Australia Stephen Pahl wrote to FT on April 23 2007, requesting FT to renew before August 31 2007.

FT did not renew as requested, and was advised on June 6 by Mr Pahl that FT was no longer certified.

Forestry Tasmania's General Manager Ken Jeffreys said that following a cost benefit analysis, he had decided last week not to seek re-certification.

"This was entirely an FT decision," Mr Jeffreys said.

EcoTourism Australia's CEO Mr Pahl was contacted for confirmation today and sent an email, confirming that EA had made no comment about FT's environmental standards or any reference to forestry operations.

David Tuck, Corporate Relations 6233 8249
ENDS
20 June 2008

Enclosures:

- (1) e-mail from EcoTourism Australia/S Pahl to FT/K Jeffreys
- (2) e-mail from EcoTourism Australia/S Pahl to FT/R Skinner)

>>> "SwissAlps2 Pty Ltd" 20/06/2008 12:53 pm >>>

Dear Mr Jeffreys

I am on leave at the moment and have received several telephone calls from my staff about an issue you have with Huon Valley Environment Centre. I am not happy at all about your intent to involve EA, nor am I happy about having to deal with this matter whilst on my leave.

Please understand the following facts:

- Ecotourism Australia has no relationship with the Huon Valley Environment Centre
- Ecotourism Australia has no knowledge of a media statement made by HVEC.
- Ecotourism Australia was asked last week by the HVEC about the status of Forestry Tasmania Certification. EA responded by confirming (factually) that Forestry Tasmania no longer has any products Certified under EA's ECO certification scheme. There was no other comment made to HVEC. This email is on record.
- Ecotourism Australia is not a forestry lobbying group. EA is the provider of an ECO Certification scheme for Australia's tourism industry.
- The HVEC media statement is NOTHING to do with Ecotourism Australia. Any statements made are the words of HVEC and not that of EA and to which we accept no liability.
- EA does not wish, nor intends to become involved in disputes between Forestry Tasmania and local conservation groups. That is not our role.

- EA no longer has any relationship with Forestry Tasmania and we wish to be now excluded from this matter and do not intend to make any statement further to the media or anyone else.

Kind Regards

Stephen Pahl

(2)

"Stephen Pahl" <ceo@ecotourism.org.au> 4/06/2008 4:18 pm >>>

Dear Richard

Forestry Tasmania has previously had two ECO Certified Products registered with Ecotourism Australia: 1) The Tahune Airwalk, and 2) The Melville Street Dome.

In 2003, Ecotourism Australia conducted a major overhaul of our ECO Certification Program, with a subsequent requirement that all ECO Certified products upgrade from the old NEAP program, to ECO Certification (III). A period of several years was allowed to enable industry to upgrade to the new standard. The cut off date was June 30 2007. Prior to and at this time we forwarded Forestry Tasmania an advice reminding your organization of the requirement to upgrade. We then subsequently advised Forestry Tasmania (and all outstanding NEAP certified products nationally) we would extend this renewal period to end October 2007. We have since been quite patient and allowed renewals to be completed by 31 May 2008.

As of 31 May 2008, both of Forestry Tasmania's ECO Certified products - Tahune Airwalk, and Melville Street Dome - are no longer certified.

Would you be so kind to advise the respective Managers of both the Tahune Airwalk and the Melville Street Dome that ECO Certification is no longer valid for both products, and that all signage, collateral, decals etc which display the ECO Certified trademarked brand, must be removed, and not used or displayed effective in 14 days, as of 17th June 2008.

An onsite Audit will be conducted at both premises during the week of 17 June to check compliance of this request.

Should you have any queries on this matter, please contact me at any time.

With Kind Regards

Stephen Pahl

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"Ecotourism is ecologically sustainable tourism with a
primary focus on experiencing
natural areas that fosters environmental and cultural
understanding, appreciation and conservation"

*Stephen
Pahl*

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